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# ALLATOONA

A PLAY IN FOUR ACTS.

*Samuel  
Anthony  
Orshall*  
By S. H. M. BYERS.

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## CHARACTERS.

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ELDRED MARSHALL, a private of the Tenth Regiment. The regiment is home on furlough.  
Time—Middle of Civil War.

LAURA GILLFORD, a Northern girl, in love with Eldred.

MARIAN LEE, a Southern girl, also in love with Eldred.

COLONEL KILGORE, of the Tenth Regiment.

MRS. KILGORE.

FLANNIGAN, a Captain on General Sherman's Staff.

A GIPSY.

PROVOST MARSHAL.

GENERAL SHERMAN.

BUNKER, Marian's negro servant.

Officers and soldiers of both armies; town marshal.

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## SCENES.

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FIRST ACT—On the lawn of the Gillford home.

SECOND ACT—A plantation at Kenesaw mountain.

THIRD ACT—Gordon Pass, in Georgia.

FOURTH ACT—A park in Savannah.







# ALLATOONA

## A PLAY

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### ACT I.

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[SCENE—The Gillford farmhouse and lawn; Colonel and Mrs. Kilgore; the latter has her arms full of flowers.]

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COL. KILGORE—Well, we've had a delightful tramp in the woods, anyway; and now, Mrs. Kilgore, if you have all the posies, shrubbery and weeds you can carry, suppose we meander off towards home. Bless me! if we haven't run right on to the Gillfords' dooryard here. How natural everything looks—same old house, same old rosebush, same old pump, same old tin cup, on the same old nail! Let's have a drink. [Goes to pump.] Nothing has changed since I went to the war, two years ago. It doesn't seem possible. [Cheers.] Listen! That's the boys of my regiment down at the fair grounds. How they have enjoyed their furlough!



MRS. KILGORE—And just to think how soon you must go south again! Oh, I hate to think of it!

COL. KILGORE—Yes; the time's already up; our furlough has expired.

MRS. KILGORE—Oh, it's a shame to go so soon! But I'm coming down to see you in almost no time. [Sees rosebush.] Look, what roses! Let me put one on your coat. [Does so.] There, now! Ah, see; over there is Laura Gillford's berry farm. [Looks off the stage.] You know she took to berry growing when the war broke out; first for fun, and then to make lots of money; and now just to be a pretty little boss. Three thousand boxes a week! It's a sight to see her with her army of boys and girls, her boxing, and counting, and packing, and shipping. I guess she's the best-natured girl, too, in the world. She does everything by pure goodness; and, then, she's so everlastingly handsome!



That girl could have her pick, you know, of anybody in the county.

COL. KILGORE—Ha, ha! her pick! Why in thunder, then, does she pick on that swell-head, Eldred Marshall—the most conceited jackanapes in my regiment, and only a private at that?

MRS. KILGORE—But, dear, private or no private, he is very brave; isn't he? He took the rebel flag at Lookout; didn't he?

COL. KILGORE—Yes; by reckless deviltry—not by bravery.

MRS. KILGORE—But the men of your regiment do think him just great. Why, they just carry him around, down at the fair grounds. Yes; they think him immense.

COL. KILGORE—Yes; that's just it; so do the fool girls in this town. I hate the upstart! If Miss Laura wants to know what she's about to marry, bring her to the camp with you, when you come south. She'll get her eyes opened. She'll discover



that a private, policing camp and living on hard tack is a mighty different thing from a private on furlough, carrying his arm in a sling, and flirting with the girls. See if she doesn't!

MRS. KILGORE—I wonder myself where the girl's pride's gone to.

COL. KILGORE—She's got none!

MRS. KILGORE—Oh, yes; she's pride itself—she's madly ambitious, besides. She hopes to see Eldred an officer yet—Colonel of your regiment, when you're made General! Why, that purring little babe has ambition and courage enough to be an Alexander.

COL. KILGORE—Well, Eldred Marshall will never be an officer with my consent; mark that.

MRS. KILGORE—The Governor may promote him for that flag business—then——

COL. KILGORE—I'll put the commission in my pocket. Eldred Marshall shall never see it. I am Colonel of the Tenth Regiment, I guess. I'll



not forget his popularity-seeking and his trying to make me ridiculous with the men. [Marian, in a green velvet dress and picture hat, listens unobserved.]

MRS. KILGORE—And I'll not forget how once he danced with Miss Gillford and left me sitting there like a wall-flower.

COL. KILGORE—Oh, well; she'll desert him quick enough. Wait till she sees a private in the camp. She'll desert him for an officer in a week. I wonder what's become of Eldred Marshall's other girl; that one he had at college in Kentucky, just as the war broke out?

MRS. KILGORE—Oh, you mean Marian Lee; poor, infatuated Marian Lee! I guess she finished herself up long ago. I heard she killed herself down there. They found a body in the Ohio river, you know.

MARIAN [passes again without their seeing



her]—Infatuated! Infatuated! Dead in the Ohio river! Do they think that?

COL. KILGORE [boy passes]—Hello! There's a telegraph boy.

BOY—Is this Col. Kilgore?

COL. KILGORE—It is.

BOY—A telegram for you, sir.

COL. KILGORE [reads it]—Gods! Look here! It's from General Sherman. Forest's guerrilla cavalry's raiding Kentucky. They've got it in for you. They'll wreck the train. Keep the hour of your going south a dead secret.—Sherman.

MRS. KILGORE—My God! What's that? You sha'n't go! Revoke the orders; stay here till the raid's over.

COL. KILGORE—Can't do it. The Secretary of War orders us to the front at once. There are big rumors that Sherman will burn Atlanta, cut everything behind him, and start for the ocean with a



hundred thousand men. It'll make him a bigger man than old Grant. The newspaper generals call Sherman crazy; Lincoln says he wishes he could find a thousand crazy men like Sherman.

MRS. KILGORE—Don't go! You will be wrecked and killed.

COL. KILGORE—Don't you fear. Nobody knows when the train leaves. You couldn't find out for a million dollars. It's a dead secret.

MRS. KILGORE—Dead secret! There are no dead secrets up here in the north. Spies are everywhere; everybody's watched. I am alarmed!

COL. KILGORE—Nonsense! Do you look for spies away up here in Iowa?

MRS. KILGORE—Certainly! Only yesterday a strange young woman in a green velvet dress and a picture hat excited attention when the band played in the village park.

COL. KILGORE—Tut, tut! Don't be alarmed. The Southern Confederacy isn't sending pretty



girls up here in green velvet dresses and picture hats, to spy out the country.

MRS. KILGORE—And why not? Women are not so much afraid of war's excitements as men imagine. Even our pretty, little, soft, sweet, dear, harmless Laura does little but talk of war and regiments and signal flags and the like—it's amusing. Why, that babe even trains her berry girls to move around by signal. They say Eldred Marshall taught her how to do it.

COL. KILGORE—Well, well! How ridiculous! [Drums heard.] There's parade call; we must go. [Exeunt.]

MARIAN [entering and looking cautiously about]—So! She'll desert him; Laura Gillford will—that's what I heard the Colonel say this minute. Eldred Marshall shall know that. I wonder if he thinks I am in the Ohio river, dead? I know he doesn't! That cold parting from me, though, in Kentucky, might have killed me. What a note that



was! Ten words in which to say good-bye forever! So they think me dead! But here I am, I—Marian Lee—a Southern spy in a Northern town. Who in this world ever would have thought that? What strange things love can do! What am I here for? To find out when the Tenth Regiment goes south. That moment I am to send Forest a cipher telegram; and he—he—will ambush and wreck the train. [Pauses.] Great God! Is that what I am here for? Murder? Oh, love—love! Does love impel a thing like that? I am not here to murder! Great heavens, no! I saw Eldred Marshall to-day in the village park. He did not know me. I almost touched his hand. That instant my love burned a thousand times anew. I had one moment of the bliss of paradise. I was no longer the rejected; I was the happy woman. Oh, what pain love brings! It is like the harbinger of death hid in leaves of roses. Oh, I must—if for one instant only—see him again—speak to him. Oh, he is here; so near; and I—I dare not see him—speak [pauses]—I will



—I will dare—I will, this hour. So this is Laura Gillford's home! To-day she has a festival. I know it all. He will be here. I, too, will be here. What would Laura Gillford think to see me here?—me—Marian Lee, who would walk around God's whole green earth for one hand clasp of her acknowledged lover. [Singing heard.] Hark! It is her festival. I must be quick. [Exit.]

[Berry girls enter, cheering and singing.]

FIRST GIRL — To-day the berrypicking's done; huzza! huzza! for laugh and fun.

SECOND GIRL [swings her box]—I've forty boxes; who has more?

THIRD GIRL—I've picked to-day just forty-four.

FOURTH GIRL—I've thirty boxes, fair and fine. What girl has got such fruit as mine?

FIFTH GIRL—I'll buy some ribbon for my hair.

SIXTH GIRL—And I a dress for Sunday wear.



ALL—Look, look! Sweet Laura's coming here. Quick, boys and girls, let's give a cheer.

[Laura enters; they cheer.]

LAURA—This is perfectly lovely in all of you. What a happy coincidence, too. The week's work is over, and here's my birthday, all at once.

GIRLS—Huzza! huzza!

LAURA—To-day every one of you gets a present, and double wages. And everyone shall take a box of berries to the soldiers at the fair grounds. The regiment will soon go back south; let our blessings and our cheers go with them.

MRS. GILLFORD—And here, daughter dear, is a present to the soldiers from the aid society. You and the girls must carry them with you. What is it? Look! Bandages, housewives and havelocks: and in every housewife there's a letter from some pretty girl. [The girls put the havelocks on, and parade about.]

FIRST GIRL [mounts a bench]—And here's to



Laura Gillford, the best and sweetest mistress anybody ever worked for. Huzza, girls! [All cheer.] And now for a song. [They sing.]

My lover is a soldier lad,  
His uniform is blue.  
Oh, well I love my soldier lad,  
For he was ever true.

The bugle sounds; he marches off.  
God bring him back to me!  
For, oh, I love my soldier lad,  
Wherever he may be.

Oh, if a bullet strike him dead,  
In death he will be true,  
And I will shed a tear for him,  
My soldier boy in blue.

LAURA [moved and almost in tears]—Oh, thank you, girls—a thousand times! [Girls go off.]  
[A messenger hands Laura a letter.]



LAURA—It is from Eldred Marshall. [Reads it] Dear Laura—I have big news. It is a dead secret, but the regiment leaves at nine to-morrow night. I go along. The doctor says I may. I come to you at once.—Eldred. Oh, oh, oh! That means farewell, perhaps forever!

GIPSY [enters]—May I tell your fortune, little maid?

LAURA [aside; collects herself]—I'll let her: I'll let her. [Aloud.] Is seventeen years so very little, Gipsy?

GIPSY—Quite right; this is your birthday, little girl. [Shows cards.] Look here! Four hearts and a joker; the combination happens only in the month of August, exactly on the 17th. See! Four times four make sixteen, and a joker—that's seventeen. May I see your hand, little one? Cards tell the past—the future is in the lines of the hand. [Takes her hand.] Just so—just so; the fates have many things for you, little girl. Yes, yes! I see



you have a lover! He is in the army; he goes back to the war. Is it true?

LAURA—Too true! Will he return?

GIPSY—He may.

LAURA—And will he love me still?

GIPSY [looks again]—Another will love him better—better than you can.

LAURA—Impossible! Impossible!

GIPSY—Have you his picture? I would see his eyes, his hair, his nose, even; 'tis thus we read the characters of men in love.

LAURA—I have his picture; I will bring it—quick. [She goes, but drops Eldred's letter. Gipsy picks it up and reads it aloud.]

GIPSY [with emotion]—My God! Here is everything—the dreadful secret. I did not seek it—spite of me, it is here! See this: To-morrow night at nine the train goes, and Eldred Marshall goes along. I did not know he was in the Tenth; I thought he was in the Seventh Regiment. And that



telegram! Oh! heaven direct me! [She kneels.] My sworn duty is to the South—my South. My love—my heart—is—Oh, this is cruel! War is cruel as the grave, but this—this is bitter, burning hell. He will be on that train. Can love impel a thing like this? Must I send that telegram? I will deserve God's curse. I will not send it. What shall I do? [Sees Laura coming back; rises.]

LAURA—Here it is. [Marian clutches at it and gazes with emotion.] But, look! There comes the original; there's Eldred himself. [To Eldred as he enters, arm in sling.] Oh, Eldred; here's a pretty little gipsy who tells fortunes. She can tell just everything. She told my birthday, my age, and—and—oh! such things, too, of you. You must have your fortune told. Come on now, quick. [He comes and kisses Laura.]

ELDRED—You got my letter, Laura?

LAURA—You are not going, Eldred?



ELDRED—Well; let us see. What say my stars, then? Come.

LAURA—Oh, I know she'll like you. Why, just to see your picture seemed to move her so. Oh, I'm glad she's not my rival. She's so young, so beautiful—and—and—

ELDRED—You have no rival, dear. [Kisses her.] She does look young for a real, true, old gipsy, doesn't she? And, suddenly, she seems all upset. I expect she only tells pretty girls' fortunes—promises them rich husbands and pretty children. Well, gipsy girl [goes to gipsy], here's my hand. Why, don't squeeze it so. And now you let it go—don't do that, either. There now, read my fate. How shine my stars? It's not so bad, is it? [Aside.] By George, how she trembles! It must be something very bad. [Aloud.] Well?

GIPSY—You are a soldier.

ELDRED—Of course; see this arm; this uniform.



GIPSY—You are one in a thousand—you bear a charmed life—and yet—

ELDRED—Will I be killed?

GIPSY—The lines are bad—yes!

LAURA—Oh, Eldred; it is not true!

ELDRED—No, no; Laura. It's guessing only she's doing. It's fun.

LAURA—I will not hear it. [Goes.]

GIPSY—You are in the Tenth—the fated regiment. See; it moves to-morrow night.

ELDRED—No one knows that; its moving is a dead secret.

GIPSY—To-morrow night at nine. I read secrets; I know.

ELDRED—How do you know?

GIPSY—Never mind. See these lines.

ELDRED [aside]—I wonder how she knows. How strange. It almost unnerves me.



GIPSY—Eldred Marshall, I give you warning—  
Do not go on that train.

ELDRED—How do you know my name?

GIPSY—Never mind—don't go.

ELDRED—Why?

GIPSY—Don't go; that is enough.

ELDRED [aside]—I wonder what in heaven  
she means. [Aloud.] What is the danger?

GIPSY [with deep emotion]—Don't go.

ELDRED—Why do you tremble?

GIPSY [much agitated]—You will be killed.

ELDRED [trying to be cool]—Would you care?

GIPSY—Don't go.

ELDRED [moved]—Would my life be some-  
thing to you?

GIPSY—Don't go.

ELDRED [steps away; aside]—How handsome  
she is—young—what eyes! I almost thought I  
knew her voice. [Aloud, going to her.] You are too



fair, too young, for such a life. Is it for bread you do this? May I help you? [Offers money.]

GIPSY—No!

ELDRED—What, then?

GIPSY—More, a thousand times more.

ELDRED—For love?

GIPSY—For love!

ELDRED—He is a scoundrel who deserts you. Only a villain could do that! Who is he? Where? I'll drive him to the earth—villain!

GIPSY—No, no! No villain; no desertion! No, no; I am happy, happy in these rags, happy this very moment. [She looks longingly at Eldred, and pauses—is much moved.] Ask nothing further.

ELDRED [aside]—My God, that's strange! For a moment—I—I——She's no gipsy. I will try her. [Aloud.] You have secret powers. Tell me; you speak of love; now—has—any—one—loved—me?

GIPSY—Yes; madly.



ELDRED—Loves still?

GIPSY—Madly!

ELDRED—You have seen her?

GIPSY—With you; just now.

ELDRED—Impossible—unless ghosts walk in broad daylight. [Aside.] I think she's crazy. [Aloud.] Where else was she?

GIPSY—Down south; perhaps it was Kentucky.

ELDRED—When?

GIPSY—Two years ago.

ELDRED [aside]—This is marvelous. She speaks of Marian Lee; there is not a doubt; poor, infatuated Marian Lee. I cut loose from her the day I left the college. [Aloud.] What is the color of her hair?

GIPSY—Sweet brown.

ELDRED—Her eyes?

GIPSY—Heaven's blue.

ELDRED—Her face?



GIPSY—White as a lily.

ELDRED [aside]—Astounding! Save her rags, she herself could be a Marian Lee. [Aloud.] And she loves me yet?

GIPSY—She would go bare-footed around the green earth for you.

ELDRED—How long ago was that, did you say?

GIPSY—Two years.

ELDRED [aside]—Astounding! Astounding! She knows the very time. She reads my mind, perhaps; perhaps she knows Marian.

[Noises; she starts; Town Marshal enters.]

MARSHAL—Have you seen a woman dressed in green velvet pass this way?

ELDRED—No. What's the matter?

MARSHAL—She is to be arrested; she is a spy. [Looks at the gipsy.] Who's this? [Marian starts.] What are these cattle doing around the village?



They may be spies! I will arrest her. [To Gipsy.]  
Come along with me.

ELDRED [aside]—I must know more; he must not take her. [Aloud.] No; wait; she must not be arrested. You have no right. She is not a spy. Get your warrant first.

MARSHAL—I need none.

ELDRED—Then leave her here. This is private ground. I am responsible. Go your way.

MARSHAL—I will not.

ELDRED—One whistle from me and the whole Tenth Regiment is on your back. The nearest mill-pond will be your grave. We soldiers run this town now—understand that!

MARSHAL—I guess that's so. Are you of the Tenth?

ELDRED—I am.

MARSHAL—Then I leave her.

ELDRED—Indeed you will; now go! [To gip-



sy.] Never mind the little village pop-guns. Go on and tell me more—more—I like all this. What else? Look further. Have I had other loves?

GIPSY [recovers herself]—One only.

ELDRED—Is she true?

GIPSY—At present.

ELDRED—Will she always love me?

GIPSY—She is proud.

ELDRED—And then?

GIPSY—She is ambitious.

ELDRED—Then?

GIPSY—She will desert you.

ELDRED—So, so—

GIPSY—Mark it; you are a private soldier; she a beautiful, proud, ambitious woman.

ELDRED—She is dear and sweet.

GIPSY—No matter; you will lose her. You are beneath her station, her ambition; you know it. You may go up—be advanced.



ELDRED—If not?

GIPSY—You lose her.

ELDRED—It's a lie!

GIPSY—Mark me; it is God's truth. If you do not believe me, try her; tell her you are refused a commission; that you will never be more than a private soldier.

ELDRED [aside]—I fear she will be tried, spite of me. [Aloud.] Then what?

GIPSY—I have told you; she will find another; she will love some officer.

ELDRED [at front of stage and aside]—Could this all be true? I do not believe it. Yet this gipsy woman has told some truths—how, I know not. A gipsy once foretold my mother's marriage, my birth, even this war. I believe in nothing, nothing they tell me. Yes, I do—a little. See here [goes to front of stage; aside] then Laura will indeed be tried, for I will never receive a commission in the Tenth Regiment. I know that the Colonel hates me.



Yes, she will be tried. She will be tried to the end of the war. If she remains faithful, as I know she will, the commander of Sherman's army will not be so happy as private Eldred Marshall. [Exit.]

GIPSY—Oh, he is gone! He did not know me; but I have seen him—spoken—heard his voice—touched his hand—happy, infatuated, crazy Marian Lee. And she, she loves him—and he—did I not see his love for her? Where did he go? To her—to her! [Looks after him.] God, how I contained myself! I had the chance—before her very eyes. I could have thrown my arms about his neck—kissed him—kissed him—killed her—yes, killed her. Now I know about the train. I could not help knowing. That letter tells it all. At nine to-morrow night! Oh, unfortunate me—to know the dreadful secret! Oh, that telegram—that telegram! Must I send it? By my sworn oath, yes. By my heart's love, no—never! [She goes up and down the stage in anguish—pauses.] Yet—perhaps—perhaps Eldred will not go.



My warning moved him—I saw it. Where's the paper—I'll send the telegram [writes]. I have no choice [pauses]. God help me; I won't; I won't. [Tears telegram to pieces.] The Southern Confederacy may hang me first; I won't! [She pauses; walks about.] Oh, why did Eldred Marshall leave me so there at school in Kentucky? Did he not know it would kill me—kill me? Did he purposely reject me? Did he not know a despised, rejected woman's fury—hate? There's nothing in hell so terrible. No, I have not got that—no—no—no! Where is he, I wonder, now? Where is Laura Gillford just this moment? [She looks from the stage.] It is! It is! My God; look there, under that beech tree—Laura Gillford in Eldred Marshall's arms. Look! He kisses her! She—she kisses him! Why am I not blind—dead? Oh, should that be—should that be? She happy, happy in his love, and I—I dying of the pain of love and the longing wretchedness that's worse than hell. No, no, no! Now I will act. What! She, she.



Laura Gillford, be in his arms, happy, when one little word of mine could end it all forever? [Seizes the paper and writes again.] I must—I must—hell itself seems driving me. Laura Gillford—Laura Gillford—I call to you, Laura Gillford—the telegram is signed!

[Curtain.]







## ACT II.

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[SCENE—Brandon Hall, a Colonial mansion on a fine plantation at Kenesaw Mountain; negro cabins, tents, etc.; a big American flag at the entrance of the mansion shows it is Sherman's headquarters; it is also Marian's home; a few soldiers in background; two negroes cleaning camp.]

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BUNKER [a negro, servant to Marian]—Well, sah, where this Mr. Sherman go next, that beats the Lord hisself. Here he am now on Massa Lee's plantation. Massa Lee dead or run away; niggers all set free and shoutin' hallelujah; cotton gin all burned up, and all Kenesaw Mountain nothin' but a graveyard. 'Pears just like the end of the world comin', sure enough. Them Yankees must ha' set a million niggers free yesterday; they jes' poured along the roads like blackbirds in springtime. And them's Mr.



Sherman's headquarters right there in Massa Lee's parlor! Reckon he's got his horses in de kitchen! Wondah what young Miss Marian Lee think of all that? Ole man dead; niggers set free—and the whole farm carmfiscated.

SECOND NEGRO — And that's Kenesaw Mountain! And them's Mr. Sherman's camp! 'Pears as I walked a hunderd million miles, barefoot, jes' to get here and holler, 'I is free.'

BUNKER—Well, la sakes! there comes Miss Marian right now, jes' sure's you're born, walkin' right along wid one of them Lincoln Captains. Well, jes' look at that! That am mighty queer, for sartin'. [Bunker and negro go off and Provost Marshal and Marian come down from house; Marian walks around, not under the flag.]

PROVOST—Well, I am very sorry, Miss Lee, that things are as they are. War is war. Nothing can be done—nothing. Your house must be occupied so long as headquarters remain at Kenesaw



Mountain. The advance guard occupied it first, you know, because shots were fired on us from its windows. The wonder is the house was not destroyed. When the commander of the army came along, he found Brandon Hall convenient for headquarters for a few days. You and your servants have been allowed to remain here. So—here we are—there is no use complaining—nothing can be done. The place is cared for now. What will happen when we move on, heaven only knows, Miss Lee.

MARIAN—Well, I know.

PROVOST—What?

MARIAN—Some of your Yankee thieves will leave it in ashes.

PROVOST [aside]—She is a bit insolent. [Aloud.] Ah, you think so—Brandon Hall is worth saving—confiscating, even!

MARIAN—I'd rather see it burned than in Northern hands forever. That would be outrageous!



PROVOST—Oh! you seem to hate us very much Miss Lee.

MARIAN—I do [pauses]—most of you.

PROVOST—You are a rebel.

MARIAN—I am proud to say so.

PROVOST—You are bitter.

MARIAN—I am of the South.

PROVOST—This is Brandon Hall.

MARIAN—My father's home, and mine. You have desecrated it. The feet of your hirelings pollute the soil of our beautiful South. You are invaders! Oh, my south; my dear, dear south! Yes, I hate you all—nearly all. Here is my dear, dear home. All our lives we have lived in this beautiful southland in peace, with culture, quiet and beauty. Our homes have been the scenes of hospitality and happiness; our slaves have been content; our fields beautiful. You come—Sherman comes—my God, the contrast! What do you bring us? Bayonets, conflagra-



grations, burning homes, desolate fields, flying slaves, robbery, insult, confiscation, murder!

PROVOST—In short, Miss Lee, we bring you war—a war you yourselves began, at Sumpter.

MARIAN—I don't care.

PROVOST—Well, you are quite a rebel.

MARIAN—Were I a man, with sword in hand I would join my brothers to-morrow, to fight you at every river, to ambush you at every swamp, to delay, to cut you off and destroy you. This army of Sherman's should never, never reach the sea. History should tell of its defeats, and old men should relate its horrors to their children's children.

PROVOST [smiles]—My—your heat becomes you. You are, indeed, a real little rebel.

MARIAN—I hope so.

PROVOST—And a real pretty one, too.

MARIAN—I spurn your compliments.

PROVOST—You are a little bitter.



MARIAN—No more than ever. I would do most anything I—

PROVOST—And it is therefore, Miss Lee, you are under surveillance here at your own home; spite of it you were absent for days lately! May I ask where, Miss Lee?

MARIAN—Ask—yes. I do not answer.

PROVOST—No; then I must arrest you.

MARIAN—Arrest! Arrest a woman!

PROVOST—Sometimes—yes!

MARIAN—Me? Me—whose home you desecrate; me, whose father you have murdered? Yes; I am your enemy.

PROVOST—Allow me, Miss Lee—you know your father was not murdered. In a skirmish near this farm, your father, feeling he was defending his own home, possibly fell. No one knows what became of him; there is no certainty that he is not with the troops that retreated south. He fought honorably; was honorably met.



MARIAN—Oh, my father! my father! Here, father; here! See here! Here is the flag you died for [she flings out a small rebel flag]—the bonny, blue flag of the South. One moment, Captain, let me wave it one moment again in front of Brandon Hall.

PROVOST—Hold; you are too bold, Miss Lee. Give me that rag; there is the flag of your country; there is the banner of the world. [Points to American flag.]

MARIAN—It is not my flag; I despise it!

PROVOST—Is that why you walked around it with such contempt as we came out?

MARIAN—I never would walk under it. I would rather trample it under my feet.

PROVOST—Oh, no, Miss Lee; you must walk under it, not around it. This very moment it protects your home.

MARIAN—It insults my home. I never will walk under it again.



PROVOST—Oh, yes, you will; you must!

MARIAN—I won't—never!

PROVOST—Right now you must. Excuse me—

MARIAN—I won't!

PROVOST—Corporal, lead this lady under the American flag! [Corporal leads her under the flag.]

MARIAN—You are brutes; I hate you worse than ever! I will have revenge!

PROVOST—Oh! no, Miss Lee. Be calm, now; you are a prisoner. To-morrow you will be in charge of the Tenth Regiment.

MARIAN—What! the Tenth! You will never see the Tenth.

PROVOST [smiles]—Well, now, Miss Lee, why?

MARIAN—Well, you won't.

PROVOST—Miss Lee, let me tell you something. The Tenth is South all right. I am the Provost Marshal of the army. I know everything.



That some of your friends proposed to wreck a train and kill the men of the Tenth, I found out. The woman spy they had up North blundered. The guerillas wrecked the wrong train. She sent a cypher telegram to Forest's raiders—I got that telegram. Look; here is the dispatch itself. [Shows dispatch.] I would give a thousand dollars for that woman, dead or alive. Were she in my hands [Marian manifests great alarm now], I'd hang her in one minute.

MARIAN—You'd hang a woman?

PROVOST—I'd hang a spy!

MARIAN [aside]—I am lost—lost!

PROVOST—They sent her picture to me with the telegram. Do you know, for a moment I thought that woman looked like you! I have the picture; you shall see it. [To boy.] Boy, bring my portmanteau here, quick. It is on the table of my room, upstairs. [With a spring Marian disappears; shots heard.] Stop that woman—stop her—she is a spy!

[Captain Flannigan and a Sergeant enter.]



CAPTAIN—She passed us before we knew it. She sprang on one of your saddle horses, Colonel, and she is gone—gone—gone! [Laughs.]

PROVOST—By heavens, why was I here without my pistols? Marian Lee, the spy, was in my hands, and is gone. That gipsy up in Iowa was Marian Lee herself—Marian Lee of Brandon Hall. I am short a horse anyway, and am a fool besides. Lord, Lord, what devilish luck! [Exit Provost.]

CAPTAIN—By Jove, Sergeant, that is a hell of a joke on the Provost, letting that woman get away, wasn't it? Well, well; we'll have other petticoats in camp pretty soon now. I've brought a pair of them.

SERGEANT—Why, who, Captain?

CAPTAIN—Why, don't you know; they sent me back fifty miles to get the Colonel's wife and her pretty cousin? Gads! there's a girl for you, Sergeant—brown hair, blue eyes, figure of a goddess, and a blush and a smile that would drive a heathen hell-bent, to madness, and I'm half gone myself. It's



a week since they started here. They had a devil of a time of it. Forest wrecked their train below Nashville—scared them nearly to death—and got half his men killed for his trouble. Misled by a cypher telegram, he thought he was wrecking the Tenth Regiment. The Provost got the telegram; the Tenth changed its route, and saved itself. Of course the ladies reached our rear guard too late to join the army, so I have brought them on here. It's luck we halted here so long.

SERGEANT—But where are these goddesses?

CAPTAIN—They will be here in no time. They stopped at the Colonel's tent to brush up a little.

SERGEANT—I am dying to see them.

CAPTAIN—Here's the situation. Everybody nearly's gone from camp, and I, Capt. Flannigan, will enjoy the felicity of introducing the ladies to life in the army. [Looks off the stage.] Ah, there they come! They've left their horses, and in a moment they are here. [Aside.] Things stand like this: From



the wife of the Colonel I have learned the young miss has got a lover here—ah, ha!—a private soldier at that—the reckless young blackguard of the Tenth that took the flag at Lookout. Likely enough he's deceivin' her, and she don't know he's nothing but a common private in the ranks! Well, she can have one OUT of the ranks in about a minute—in short, she's got him now—and, Captain Flannigan, you're the man. Here they come. [Aloud, as the ladies enter on foot in handsome riding costumes.] Ladies, I greet you; I welcome you to the army in the name of the Colonel; also on behalf of yours humbly [bow], Captain Flannigan, of the regular army, on the staff, inspector of ambulances, etc., etc., etc.—yours to command.

MRS. KILGORE—But, Captain, where's my husband? He was not at his tent when we stopped.

CAPTAIN—This moment, Madam, I learn that he and nearly all the Tenth Regiment have gone to the right of the army. It's ten miles from here.



There's a little nasty fighting there, at a river crossing.

LAURA—The Tenth, did you say?

CAPTAIN—Every son of a gun—all at the front.

LAURA—Not one excused? Not one here to meet us?

CAPTAIN—Not one, save—[he bows.]

LAURA—Not even Eldred? I—I mean Mr. Marshall—Eldred Marshall, you know.

CAPTAIN—Ah—um—I see—I see [coughs]—Private Eldred Marshall. Oh, no! Privates are all needed at the front. They are the blackguards that do the fighting, you know!

LAURA [much nettled]—But don't the officers fight?

MRS. KILGORE—Of course they do, Laura. Why, what are you thinking about? The dear Captain was only joking. The charges and all that—the taking of places, you know—that's always done



by the officers. You read about it in the newspapers. My dear husband has told me a thousand times how he and the generals stormed up Lookout just in time to save the privates from all being killed. Haven't you seen the big gold sword my husband, the dear Colonel, got for taking a fort somewhere?

LAURA [amazed and perplexed]—Why, why—yes—but you know I thought he was behind that day—sick; or his horse broke down; or something. I thought the men took the fort. Wasn't that where Eldred got wounded taking the rebel flag?

MRS. KILGORE—Yes, yes! [embarrassed] but it was confidence in their commander, you know. They knew he was—was—was—some place.

CAPTAIN [coughs; aside]—Yes, some place—that's good. [Exit Mrs. Kilgore, with Sergeant.]

LAURA [aside]—There's something in it, then. How often I've heard that a private is a nobody except when home on furlough. But Eldred's a private, and he is somebody—the only somebody in the



world, I think! I wonder if the Captain has stormed places and taken forts? [Looks at him.] He doesn't look like it. Yet he's just handsome enough to do most anything. He might storm a woman's heart easy enough. I am sure I like his brogue. How handsome his uniform is—my!

CAPTAIN—You are a famous rider, Miss Gillford; I saw it on the way here. You took my breath by your horseback elegance. What is the adage—"A handsome horse and a handsome girl, make a man's heart go pit-a-pat, whirl." My heart's been on the whirl all the way down here.

LAURA [laughing]—Your head, too, seems turned a little, Captain!

CAPTAIN—Oh, now, but you're the guilty one, and none but you can turn it back again. We have such fine horses in the camp—Kentuckians, every one of them. The foraging boys bring them from the plantations, you know. You will honor me with some horseback rides about the camp now, won't



you? Oh, yes; I see a "yes" sparkling in the mischief of your eye—in the rose blush of your pretty cheek.

LAURA—What perfect nonsense, Captain; and you've been at it all the way here.

CAPTAIN—And I'll be at it till the world stops its runnin' 'round. What perfectly elegant times we'll have in the camp! Save ridin', we gentlemen of the staff have just nothing else to do.

LAURA [smiling]—Except taking forts, and storming places, and doing the fighting, you know.

CAPTAIN [coughs]—Come now; you're hard on us, Miss Gillford; hard on gentlemen of the headquarters.

LAURA [aside]—I see my way; I will humor this dainty coxcomb just a little, little bit. He shall think I am dead in love with him. He can help me to get the ear of General Sherman. I'll try him. [She smiles coquettishly on him.] How perfectly lovely



it must be to be on the commander's staff [he bows]—and you know Sherman so well, Captain?

CAPTAIN—Intimately, Miss Gillford. As I told you coming here, I ride with him from column to column. Sometimes he says to me, "Captain Flannigan, should we attack here, or yonder?" I, with a little emphasis, cry, "Not here—yonder—yonder!" And away, bang, fling, bang, bang, go the horses and the cannon!

LAURA—How perfectly lovely that must be! [He bows.] You know, on the way down, Captain, you promised I should see the great Sherman.

CAPTAIN—Indeed! Indeed! Leave that to me. Nothing is easier.

LAURA—I don't mean just to see him—but to talk to him—interview, or what is it you call it?

CAPTAIN—Ah! That is different. He won't receive women alone—he won't hear of them. [Pauses.]

LAURA [aside]—I wonder what the General



will think, then, of the letter I wrote him, asking the promotion of Eldred?

CAPTAIN—Wait; leave that to me. Yes, I will attempt it. Allow me—your face, your smiles, your loveliness, shall be my aids.

LAURA—What perfect nonsense! Well, how lovely you are to do that, Captain. [Aside.] I hope I am not doing something wrong—Think of it! I will see the commander. I will plead for Eldred—he shall be promoted; wear a sword, a sash, and—and—[Aloud.] To-morrow, then, Captain?

CAPTAIN—To-morrow, Miss Laura—I hope I may call you that—mayn't I?

LAURA—Oh! anything, so I may just see General Sherman. It's lovely in you, Captain.

CAPTAIN [aside]—Anything! Think of that! Flannigan, you lucky dog—confound you, think of it! Anything! That's business; that's campaigning—that is! By gum, "anything"—gee whillikens, Jerusalem—"anything!" I know what I will call her by



and by—Mrs. Laura Gillford Flannigan, by gum!—that's it—"anything!"

[Cheers heard.]

LAURA—Why, Captain, what's all that noise?

CAPTAIN—That's the foragers. You're just in time. Sherman's "bummers" coming to camp at sundown. [Foragers in motley garb enter; some negroes with them.] Here they come, the yelling blackguards. They're a handsome lot of devils. See Miss Laura, every rascal's got a sheep, or a rooster. I wonder how many plantations they've cleaned out to-day?

LAURA—And the black people, Captain?

CAPTAIN—They're the freed niggers. About a hundred million of them block the roadways, praisin' God and shoutin' hallelujah. At night they come and serenade the camp with their plantation melodies. [Foragers sing.]



Oh, here's to the bummer who longest  
can ride—

A sheep on his shoulder, a gun at his  
side—

And to every good fellow who goes on  
before,

To forage good food for the Grand  
Army Corps.

[Twilight comes on.]

CAPTAIN—But, bless me, it is coming night.  
May I have the honor to show you to your tent,  
Miss Laura? [Conducts her to a tent; darkness in-  
creases as the two go out.]

[Foragers and negroes go out; Bunker and an-  
other negro enter.]

BUNKER—Well, sah; I reckons as taps'll beat  
afore long, and then dis nigger he goes to bed, he  
does. I'se pretty tired, I is—ridin' fifty miles on that  
blamed mule, follerin' Captain Flannigan and them  
there women to-day. Wonder if that 'ere Captain's



'fraid to go alone? That's why he jes' tuk me along. 'case he knowed I knowed every 'possum path and wagon road in the state of Georgia. Say, did you see that young white gal what we'uns brought along down? Pow'ful pretty, she is. Guess the Captain he's dead gone on her, sure enough. Them two jes' rode together, holdin' hands like, and smilin' on one another all the way. Where's all them Tenth Regiment fellows, Jumbo?

JUMBO—Oh, they's been scrimmagin' all day down there at the run; they's jes' now come back. They's on guard to-night, they is.

BUNKER—Listen! Hear them cottonfield niggers singin' hallelujah for Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Sherman. They's comin'. [Slaves with bundles and torches, some in chains, enter, sobbing and praying; moon rises a little; stage is lighter; Eldred seen guarding Laura's tent; she does not know it.]

SLAVE—Sure enough; this am the day of God's



people. Now am the time of jubilee. [They kneel in the moonlight and sing.]

Last night I heard the whippoorwill,

Good-bye ;

I think I hear his sweet voice still,

Good-bye, plantation.

An angel brought some good news round,

Good-bye ;

Oh, don't you hear the joyful sound?

Good-bye, plantation.

Oh, if you never prayed before,

Good-bye ;

Just now you's bound to pray the more,

Good-bye, plantation.

I think I hear the angels sing,

Good-bye ;

Oh, don't you hear the angel's wing?

Good-bye, plantation.



Oh, make your garments clean and white,

Good-bye;

Great news has come to you this night,

Good-bye, plantation.

Oh, Massa Linkum, make us free,

Good-bye;

Oh, let us hail the jubilee,

Good-bye, plantation.

[The moon brightens; Laura is seen standing in tent door, listening; slaves go off slowly.]

LAURA [looking about]—What a scene this is! What moonlight! How enchanting that music! It must be morning, yet I scarcely slept. Eldred, Eldred—I did not answer his letter. I have come a thousand miles to answer with my own lips; to see his face. Too late—he is gone—perhaps forever! What did he write me? “To-morrow,” he said, “may be the battle. If I fall it will be as a private soldier at the post of duty.” How I wish he were an officer. He says there is no hope—yet he must, he shall



be promoted. I will seek it for him. Perhaps General Sherman will answer my letter. He can do everything; and the Captain this very morning will arrange an interview. Oh, morning, come—come soon! Look; it is the dawn! How beautiful it is! [Exit Laura.]

ELDRED [to Corporal of Guard approaching]  
—Who comes there?

CORPORAL—Corporal of the Guard.

ELDRED—Advance and give the countersign.  
[He does so.] The countersign is right.

CORPORAL—All well here?

ELDRED—Everything. Once I thought I heard a woman talking.

CORPORAL—No wonder, Marshall. Fellows in love hear most anything. It is nonsense guarding this tent at all. There is nothing in it but broken muskets. How lovely the moonlight.

ELDRED—It is like our moonlight in the North.



What is it Shakespeare says of such a night? He says it is like music, and he tells Jessica to sit down and look how all the floor of heaven is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold. It's lovely, isn't it?

CORPORAL—And your Jessica, comrade; where is she this moonlight night? Tell me about her now. One could think from your hints that she must be a crowned queen.

ELDRED—And queen she is, too—my queen, and crowned with her own dear loveliness. It happened thus: Love is an inspiration, a glance, a touch, and it is born. One sunlit afternoon, walking together on a grassy slope, we stopped to gather violets—she and I. A calm, deep river swept at our feet. We stood and gazed. Her eyes were on the placid stream, and mine—they were on her. I saw a rosy blush across her cheek; a certain light spoke in her eye—and suddenly, suddenly, as if from heaven, a something touched me—my fate was there—I was in love.



CORPORAL—Well, well! Did she speak?

ELDRED—No—and yes. There was a glance, a blush, that spoke a language none but lovers understand.

CORPORAL—Well, comrade, good night; good morning, rather. I leave you to the moonlight and your queen. [He goes; Eldred paces farther from the tent.]

ELDRED—It seems a year since Laura said farewell—on such a night—by the rosebush, on her father's farm. Oh! could I see her one moment only—here—here! Alas! She is a thousand miles away. [Laura at tent door, but does not hear.] My last letter even was never answered. Why? Was the gipsy right? Will she, can she, tire of me because I have no rank. I will not believe it; besides, some day—elsewhere—my merit may advance me. I'll deserve it, though it cost my life. Oh! Laura, one word this night, and I were happy. [He takes up the call heard outside, five o'clock.] Five o'clock, and all is



well. [Laura appears again; Eldred is relieved from his post.]

LAURA—Hark, that call! 'Tis not all well! Oh, my heart, my heart! Where to-night is Eldred?—perhaps—perhaps—[Bugle sounds.] Listen; there is the reveille—the morning comes. [Exit.]

[Daylight comes; Bunker and a negro enter, policing camp.]

BUNKER—Hello, nigger! Where's you bin all this here blessed night? I hearn say su'thin's up. There ain't no use in them reveilles makin' so much noise this late in the mornin'—half the soldiers left the camp down there at midnight, jes' quiet as you please. Su'thin' up; sure's you born. The whole camp's empty as a cracker box. Listen! [Explosions heard, far off.] Guess they's blowin' up Atlanta—hear them booms.

[Laura has left tent by back door; meets Mrs. Kilgore.]

MRS. KILGORE—Good morning, Laura; after



your first night in the army, I'm glad you're up so early. They say there was great excitement with the advance guard on our right, ten miles from here. Once at midnight I thought I heard a cannon. They say everybody's out of camp. We two women seem to be about all that's left to guard headquarters.

LAURA—Hark! Wasn't that a gun?

MRS. KILGORE—There are dreadful rumors. Some say Sherman's army is surrounded; that Hood with fifty thousand men got behind us in the night. [Noise in distance.] Some say we are blowing up Atlanta.

LAURA—What is that?

MRS. KILGORE—My God! It is the long roll, calling the soldiers to fall in. [Ladies go to one side; Flannigan comes down the steps from the house.]

FLANIGAN [aside]—Hear that! Egad! there'll be work to-day; I must to horse. But first I must hunt up the ladies. Bless me! yonder they are. Ha, ha! that was a pretty little trick Miss Laura played



on me. She asks me to get her a meeting with General Sherman, when I'll be blessed if she wasn't writin' him love letters in the most familiar way, all the time. By chance I saw her letter on the General's open desk this very morning. Eh! The little minx openly and unblushingly tells the General she is in love with one of his soldiers, and she begs him to make him a captain on the staff! Heavenly Moses! that girl's been fooling me! Flannigan, you are a blamed fool. Well, I'll be even with her. That interview—she'll not get that—not this year—will she, Flannigan? Well, I guess not. So I may call her "anything?" Lord of Moses, she's an infernal little flirt—that's what I call her. Flannigan, you're a d—d—d— fool, you are! [He goes over to the ladies.] Ah! the top of the mornin' to you, sweet ladies! You are up with the lark; or was it the nasty cannon raised you from your slumbers?

MRS. KILGORE—Oh, dear! Captain; why shouldn't we be up with such terrible news going?



LAURA—Dear Captain; it is arranged, is it—the interview with the General?

FLANIGAN [aside]—Well, scarcely. [Aloud.] Oh, yes; Miss Gillford—that is, not to-day—soon, you know—the commander is so overwhelmed with duty. But [Coughs and looks at Laura's letter.] I'm lookin' after it, Miss Laura—Miss Gillford—I'm lookin' after it. [Laura seems vexed.] The General hurried to the front, you know. [Aside.] I don't think the little deceiver will see Sherman at all, at all—not this year—will she, Flannigan?

MRS. KILGORE—How I pity the private soldiers. They'll all get hurt, or something, before the General gets there. Do you think the dear General had his bath, Captain, before rushing off in such nasty haste?

FLANNIGAN [coughs and laughs aside]—Oh, certainly; certainly! And a clean collar. He puts one on, every month. It's a sure sign of fight, that clean collar is. [Noises; an officer rushes in.]



OFFICER—Quick! Quick! Is there anyone here who can signal? The signal officer is dead at his post; the garrison at Allatoona, twenty miles away, is surrounded and no one can tell them to hold on till Sherman gets there. It's worth a million dollars to signal there this minute. The crisis is here! The whole army may be lost!

MRS. KILGORE—Now, Laura, look—what a chance! Once you said you learned the signals—you used them with your berry girls, for fun. Pitch in. Now's your chance—why don't you volunteer and save your country?

LAURA [to officer]—Oh! can I—may I—may I try? Am I permitted?

OFFICER—Any money, Miss, if you can signal and save the army. If ever you were quick in this world, be quick now. The commander will be here in a moment. He will talk with you.

FLANNIGAN [aside]—Thunder, she'll see him in spite of me.



LAURA—Oh, I'll try! I'll try!

OFFICER—Soldier, give her the glasses and the flag. [He hands them to her.] Mount this box—here's the highest point of all. Here, from Kenesaw, we can see everywhere. Call Allatoona, quick! Look among the hills to the north—there—do you see the fort?

LAURA [looking steadily and long]—I see nothing—only hills and smoke. Make the platform higher. [Looks again.] Yes! Yes! I see a fort! The fog lifts.

GEN. SHERMAN [entering]—Look again, young lady; keep cool. What do you see?

LAURA—A fort—two forts—close together. They are on two hills—a deep cut or chasm divides them. A thin bridge, like the web of a spider, swinging away up in the air, crosses from one fort to the other. Look; men are walking on it! I see them.

SHERMAN—Look again—very closely. Do you



see the fort's embrasures? Is there no flag there?

LAURA—No, General; nothing—only the ends of the cannon and some men on the fort's parapet.

SHERMAN—He must be there—Corse must be there! The fort is lost if he is not! The last message in the night said he was hurrying across from Rome. He must be there!

LAURA—Oh, look! Look! Yes, I do; I see a little flag above one of the cannon. Keep still—look—they're waving it—they are trying to talk to us—they've seen my signal. Be still—be still—there—there is a word—they're spelling it.

SHERMAN—What is it?

LAURA [spells slowly]—C-o-r-s-e. [All clap hands.] Wait; there's more—"Corse—is—here!

[All excited.]

SHERMAN—Great—that's great! He'll never surrender. Try again—be careful—what further?

LAURA—The flag—they wave again. [She pauses.]



SHERMAN—Speak! What is it?

LAURA—"French, with 5,000 men, has us surrounded. He came before daylight. Demands our surrender, or will kill us all. Can you help? He has the black flag up."

SHERMAN—How many?

LAURA—Five thousand.

SHERMAN—And Corse but nineteen hundred. Try again—try again.

LAURA—Again the flag waves.

SHERMAN—Read it—read it!

LAURA—"The enemy advances on three sides of the fort at once. He gives us five minutes to surrender or be stormed, and—"

SHERMAN—He doesn't dare kill them—see again!

LAURA—"Our regiment outside the fort is half destroyed—its commander dead—cannon, ammunition fail us—plenty in east fort, but the high bridge



is swept by musketry. They press us—they press us!” I myself can see the long lines storming against the fort. They are many deep; an awful blaze from our cannon meets them. Oh, look! They waver. No; other lines advance behind them—only more—and more. Oh! Oh! They are climbing to the very parapet. Look; quick! They are hurled back. Look! I see the flag again.

SHERMAN—What says it?

LAURA—“We will not yield,” it says. “Six hundred of my men are dead or dying.”

SHERMAN—Quick! Tell him to hold the fort, for I am coming. [She waves the flag.] Tell him ten thousand under Howard are hurrying to the enemy’s rear. Signal Howard, down in the valley, to force everything. Tell him to burn houses, that I may see his advance.

LAURA—He’s doing it—he’s doing it already! I see his galloping cavalry. He’s almost there. Oh, look at the fort! Its terrible—they are dragging the



dead back from the embrasures. The bridge—the bridge! Oh! Men are crossing on that terrible bridge—they are carrying ammunition! Look—look! They are over! Oh, the smoke—the smoke! I can see nothing—it is lost—the fort is lost! [Great emotion by all.] Oh, it is murderous! My God! No; no! Look—the flag! I see it—I see it!

SHERMAN—What says it?

LAURA—“They’ve fallen back—they fly—Allatoona’s saved!” [All shout, shake hands, and cry, Allatoona’s saved.]

SHERMAN [to staff]—Send orders for relief column to hurry back—the march to the sea goes on—announce the great news to the army. Tell the soldiers a young girl helped save Allatoona. Tell them, in war as in peace, “readiness” is the thing. Be always ready; learn of everything—everywhere; no telling when it’s wanted. This young girl learning the signal flag as a pastime, has helped to immortalize Sherman’s soldiers. [All except Sherman and



Laura go out.] Miss Gillford, come here! What can I say to you? [Kisses her on the forehead.] This day you have made yourself a name; you have done a great service to your country. How can I reward you?

LAURA—Oh, General Sherman; no reward! I ask no reward. It was all so plain a duty. I am so glad I could. I was afraid I could not do it—but, oh, I am so glad!

SHERMAN [takes an army badge from his breast; pins it on Laura]—This is my badge. Wear it Miss Gillford for me, so long as the war shall last. And what further can I do for you or yours?

LAURA—Oh, for me—nothing! I ask nothing! But—but—

SHERMAN—But—but— Speak! Have you a friend—a brother—a lover—in the army that I can benefit?

LAURA—Did you not see my letter?

SHERMAN—A moment only. And that was



yours? Where is your friend? He took a flag at Lookout Mountain, I think you wrote me—that was brave. He had a medal for it, did he not? He was rewarded.

LAURA—He is still a private soldier.

SHERMAN—And?

LAURA—Oh, General; if he could be here, near you—an officer. [She blushes.] I ask only this. He is so brave.

SHERMAN—There's not a vacancy of any kind. To create a place is never done, save for extraordinary things. Many men have taken flags; few got gold medals for it.

LAURA—Give him the chance—he will do other things.

SHERMAN—I would not want on your account to put his life in extraordinary peril.

LAURA—He is a soldier—try him! He will do anything—go anywhere!



SHERMAN—I believe you, but is there not some favor instead of this that I may grant you? Some——

LAURA—Oh, General, no favor so great as this. I would see him an officer. I would see him near you, wearing a sword of honor. This is my ambition. Say yes—he will earn it—try him!

SHERMAN [walks about]—To please you, to reward you, and because he is brave—I will make a chance. In war, the post of honor is the post of danger. He shall be honored in a trying undertaking as no other private soldier in the army has been honored. [Pauses.]

LAURA—Oh, General; he will deserve it!

SHERMAN—Soon we must cross a dangerous river. A few miles above the ford is a strong redoubt, filled with cannon. It is the key to “Gordon Pass.” That fort must be captured at whatever cost! I propose to spike its guns before assaulting it! There will be work there! I would not trust the



attempt to one soldier in a thousand. Not one man in a hundred escapes from such a thing alive. Your lover, Eldred Marshall, a private of the Tenth Regiment, shall have the honor of trying to enter that fort and spike its cannon. If he wins—if he survives—

LAURA [aside]—If he survives—survives! My God, what have I done? If he survives!

[Curtain.]



### ACT III.

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[SCENE—Gordon Pass, a narrow defile in the hills and woods; a small redoubt with cannon; a few soldiers in gray moving about and talking outside the fort.]

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FIRST SOLDIER—What infernal fools to leave a dozen men here to hold an advanced fort! There are fords five miles below; they'll cross the river and flank us.

SECOND SOLDIER—They can't; every man has gone to meet them. That's why our Lieutenant took the whole company on the run. Hell! we're all right. A dozen men can hold this place ag'in a hundred. Besides, there isn't a Yankee within a mile of here.

MARIAN [entering, dressed as in Act I]—Who commands this battery?



SECOND SOLDIER—Nobody—that is, all of us—the Lieutenant's hurried down the river where the fighting is.

MARIAN—Then let me command. I hold a commission. I am Marian Lee, the scout.

SOLDIERS—Bully for you! Hurrah for the new commander!

MARIAN—Then, here are your orders: No noise! If attacked—fight!—hang on till help comes. Save these guns—mind that!

SOLDIER—Don't you mind, Miss—we'll hang on, all right. [A messenger dashes in out of breath.]

MESSENGER—Gosh! I nearly killed myself hurryin' here. Five miles on a dead run. The Yanks are crossin' the river below. Everybody down there is fightin' like hell. Colonel says, hang on; can't send you help for an hour. He wants you to hold this fort!

SOLDIERS—We'll do it! We'll do it!

[Messenger takes some letters from pocket.]



MARIAN—What papers have you there? What are they?

MESSENGER—Damned if I know—can't read writin' on the run, I can't. Killed a Yank down there—pulled this out of his clothes. Got a watch, too. Look here! What'll you give me for it? Nickel plate, guaranteed to run to the end of the war.

MARIAN—Give me the papers. Was he killed?

MESSENGER [gives one paper]—Killed? Well, I'd think! Dead as a mackerel; never kicked!

MARIAN [aside; looks at paper]—Heavens! its Colonel Kilgore they've killed! [Aloud.] What else have you? [Messenger gives another paper; aside.] Look at that! If there isn't a commission from the Governor of Iowa to Eldred Marshall! What's on the back of it? [Reads.] "This commission not to be delivered." Well, well, well! Colonel Kilgore has kept this a secret, and here it is on his dead body. [Aloud.] Men, it is Colonel Kilgore, of the Tenth Regiment, that's killed!



MESSENGER—Of course it is; here's his name on the watch.

SOLDIERS—Huzza! Huzza!

MESSENGER—And here's a letter. [Gives it to Marian.]

MARIAN—Ah! it's from the Colonel's wife. She's in camp. There's nothing in it. [Aside.] Yes—yes! Here's Laura Gillford's name. It's a post-script. [Reads.] “Laura's in fine health—having a good time, as usual, flirting with one of the Lieutenants. She knows the difference now between an officer and a nobody! Her eyes are opened! I think she is in love with the Lieutenant.” [Still aside.] Oh, heavens! The fates favor me! Laura Gillford is already deserting Eldred Marshall! So, she is in love with the Lieutenant! God speed her merrily. [Aloud, to Messenger.] You have another paper, boy. [He hands it to her; she glances it over with excitement.] Heavens! Look here, men! This



fort may be assaulted in five minutes! Here's an order from General Sherman.

SOLDIERS—Read it! Read it!

MARIAN [reads]—"There's a little fort at Gordon Pass, five miles to the left of the enemy's position. It is poorly defended, but has fine guns. I want it taken. Make an attack at the ford, down the river. If the enemy leaves the fort to meet you, burn the white house on the hill, as a signal! That moment some picked men, now hid near the fort, will rush in, surprise them, and spike its cannon. Then it can easily be assaulted.—Sherman."

FIRST SOLDIER—They'll spike the guns, will they? Thunder, we'll kill every man of them!

MARIAN—Quick! Hurry with that letter to the commander!

SECOND SOLDIER—Lord! look yonder! that white house is burning, sure as guns!

MARIAN—It's the signal. Spring to your posts—quick! [All go into fort.]



[Eldred and a few comrades, unobserved from the fort, appear with sabres and ladders.]

ELDRED—Be cautious, men! You know your orders—get in there—spike the guns, though every one of you be killed. I will go first. [Aside.] It's like a trap of death; but we'll do it. [Aloud.] They have not seen us. Quiet—ready—follow me—spring! [With a yell they climb into the fort, spike the guns, fight hand to hand, but are driven out or killed. Rebel soldiers come down to front of fort—fight Eldred.]

REBEL—It's the Tenth. Remember Atlanta! Remember the nigger regiment! Kill every son of a gun!

ALL—Remember Atlanta!

[Eldred is overcome and falls on the ground.]

SOLDIER—Bayonet him—he's of the nigger regiment—he's of the Tenth!

MARIAN [suddenly rushes to where Eldred lies, recognizes him and cries out]—Stop! Stop! Spare



him! [Soldiers look astonished.] Go into the fort—leave him to me. [Soldiers go into fort.]

MARIAN—I will save you.

ELDRED [slow and dazed]—Who are you?

MARIAN—I can save your life.

ELDRED—Who—are—you?

MARIAN—A friend.

ELDRED—A friend? Who—who?

MARIAN—Do you not know me?

ELDRED [slowly]—Your—face—[he rises]

MARIAN—Oh, Eldred! Oh, Eldred! Yes—Yes—Look at me, Eldred—look at me!

ELDRED—And you are here in the hell of war!

MARIAN—To save you!

ELDRED—And you are my enemy?

MARIAN—Eldred—quick!

ELDRED—Go away!

MARIAN—Eldred; Eldred Marshall! Think of the past—that night on the college campus—that



night you took my hand—and—and—Eldred, that hour—that moment—heaven spoke to me.

ELDRED—It was a boy's passion—it was never love.

MARIAN—It was—it was—Eldred—it was! From that moment to this bloody day I have been yours—yours in every fiber of my soul. I have died a hundred times for you. Oh! I have suffered—I have suffered. You left the college almost without a word to me; and still I loved and bore; though rejected, I was forever yours. You could not help it—I could not—God himself cannot help it when we love. [Full of agitation.] Look at me, Eldred! Speak to me!

ELDRED [with great feeling]—I love another.

MARIAN—No—no—no! It is not true! You shall not! I know her—I know her! You shall not—she is not worthy!

ELDRED—What? Be careful!

MARIAN—I know her—she will desert you. To



her, you are only a private soldier—to me, you are heaven! She is ambitious. I saw her in your camp. She worships rank—office—

ELDRED—You saw her?

MARIAN—Why not? I go everywhere! I am a scout—a spy—for love, for love!

ELDRED—You saw her?

MARIAN—Yes; a week ago—gallanting, flirting with the officers of your camp.

ELDRED—It is not true.

MARIAN—It is—it is! Look here! [Shows letter.] Read this letter, from the wife of your Colonel. It was found on his dead body, an hour ago.

ELDRED—Was he killed?

MARIAN—Yes; in the fight at the lower ford.

ELDRED—Are we defeated?

MARIAN—Yes—look about you. But, this letter—read it! Do I lie? [Reads it herself aloud and gives it to Eldred.] “Every day she rides with the



Lieutenant." [She repeats this and looks steadily at Eldred.]

ELDRED—It is a lie.

MARIAN—It is no lie. Leave this war without promotion—rank—and she deserts you.

ELDRED—I will get promotion. I have earned it

MARIAN—Never! Look! there is your commission, marked, "Not to be delivered."

ELDRED—Villain!

MARIAN—She will desert you.

ELDRED [aside]—A gipsy told me that once. [He looks at letter.] What does it mean?

MARIAN [after a pause]—Eldred Marshall, let me save your life—my life. Come to one whose very soul is yours—who asks no title, office, rank—only you—you!

ELDRED—Marian!

MARIAN—Are you amazed? Dare a woman not



confess her love? I dare—I dare—here—here—in the awful circumstance of war—Eldred Marshall, I tell you, I love, I love, I love you!

ELDRED—It must not be.

MARIAN—It is done. God himself cannot undo it.

ELDRED—Then we are lost.

MARIAN—No—no—no! Not lost! Come to me—we are saved, rather. I have friends in the South. They are powerful. It was for you I entered this bloody business of war. Love drove—drove me. Let love save you. Come—leave your unjust cause.

ELDRED—What?

MARIAN—Come to the South—that land which fights not for invasion, but for its happy homes.

ELDRED—What mean you—desert my flag? Marian Lee, I have sworn to die rather than see my country perish.

MARIAN—It has already perished. The South has left it, and will fight to the bitter end.



ELDRED—This makes us enemies.

MARIAN—No, no! Come! In the South, advancement—love—awaits you. In the North, failure—desertion. Eldred Marshall, you know it.

ELDRED [aside]—Some things come back to me. When I wrote her that letter, saying I would, if need be, forfeit love and die a private soldier—why did she never answer it? She is on trial! She does not know it. What said that gipsy once? The very words now used by Marian. Great God! and do I waver?

MARIAN—Eldred, you now know the truth—you know you doubt her.

ELDRED—No; she will be tried to the uttermost end.

MARIAN—Listen! Here love is sure, Eldred. Act now—come!

ELDRED—Marian, I am sorry for you.

MARIAN—Then come.



ELDRED—Never!

MARIAN—Eldred, speak! Do you reject my woman's love? Oh! Eldred; hell is not so painful as a love despised! Say you do not reject me!

ELDRED—I pity you.

MARIAN—Do you reject?

ELDRED—No—yes—I only pity you.

MARIAN—Save your life, at least.

ELDRED—If love is gone, life is not worth the saving.

MARIAN—Say you love me—and you are free.

ELDRED—What! lie to you? Be free at such a price? No; I am your prisoner—your people will kill me; but liberty at your hands, at such a price—never!

MARIAN—You are defeated here. Sherman's invading army will be lost.

ELDRED—Lost—lost? He has a hundred thousand men who never were defeated. He goes



everywhere. Your slaves, your plantations—all are in his hands. Behind him, nothing is left but desolation. He cuts a swath in Georgia sixty miles wide, from Atlanta to the ocean.

MARIAN—There are brave hands still. This very river's a defense; this fort, a barrier.

ELDRED—It falls in half an hour.

MARIAN—What? Our guns are double loaded.

ELDRED—Your guns are spiked. You cannot fire them.

MARIAN—Spiked? When? By whom?

ELDRED—By me. That little moment inside the breastwork was enough.

MARIAN—You did it?

ELDRED—Yes. I expected death—I ask no mercy.

MARIAN—Eldred, I set you free—fly—now!

ELDRED—I will not.



MARIAN—Eldred, there still is time—a word—one word. Can you never love me?

ELDRED—I pity you.

MARIAN—Am I wrong? Let it be wrong. Oh! Eldred; one day of such a love were better than an age of common worship.

ELDRED—This is a sickness. You must change—cure yourself.

MARIAN—Love-sickness asks no cure, rather death. [Pauses.] Am I not fair, Eldred? You said it once.

ELDRED—And say it still.

MARIAN—Why, then?

ELDRED—I cannot.

MARIAN—Then go to your own lines—be saved!

ELDRED—I dare not. It were cowardice—shame.



MARIAN—No one shall know you were in my hands—go! [A soldier listens.]

ELDRED—Better die.

MARIAN—Then you will die. Oh! Eldred; some day—some day—will it be different?

ELDRED [with deep feeling]—Marian, no!

MARIAN—Not if I leave all, desert everything?

ELDRED—What?

MARIAN—Fly with you—leave country; betray all all, all, but love?

ELDRED—Marian!

MARIAN—Oh! love is so great! Is this betrayal? Him who betrays for love, the angels worship. Some day—some day, Eldred?

ELDRED—No!

MARIAN—Do you hate me?

ELDRED—No—no—no!

MARIAN—Would you turn my life to black death?



ELDRED—I pity, pity, pity you—pity myself.

MARIAN—Is it no more—pity, only?

ELDRED [Federal guns heard]—I pity you.

MARIAN—Is that all? Fly, then!

ELDRED—Fly yourself. [Guns heard nearer.]

MARIAN—Then here, quick! Take this! [Offers Eldred a dagger.]

ELDRED—What will you have me do?

MARIAN—Kill me!

ELDRED—Marian Lee!

MARIAN—I am not crazy, Eldred; it is only love—love—love! Kill me!

ELDRED—Marian!

MARIAN—You will not? Then there is no help. Look! They come for you.

FIRST SOLDIER [to Eldred]—Prisoner, come—this moment! [Soldiers take Eldred off.]

SECOND SOLDIER [to Marian]—Traitor! You are a traitor!



MARIAN—Back! [Threatens with dagger.] I am no traitor.

SECOND SOLDIER—We heard all; you are—you are—here in the face of the enemy.

MARIAN—You have your prisoner—I am no traitor. [To Eldred, being led away,] Too late—too late!

MESSENGER [entering in haste]—Men, fly! Save yourselves! That letter of Sherman's was a blind—a trick. A big force crossed the river above us. They are behind us. They'll be on us in no time.

FOURTH SOLDIER—Never! Quick, to the guns!

THIRD SOLDIER—They are spiked!

MESSENGER—I tell you, save yourselves! [Some of the Rebels fly. Marian stands, dazed, in front of the fort.]

MARIAN—They fly, the cowards! I have this yet. [Looks at dagger. Federal soldiers spring in and over fort, from sides and behind. A few fall,



wounded. Marian is about to stab herself, when a Federal officer catches the dagger.]

OFFICER—Stop—hold! Who are you?

MARIAN—A distracted woman. What have I done? I have gone mad. I am lost—he is lost! Now may God's heavens fall down on me.

OFFICER—Who are you? [No answer.] Speak! Who are you?

MARIAN—Kill me!

OFFICER—We kill no woman. Speak! Are you an army nurse? You will be cared for.

MARIAN—No.

SECOND OFFICER—By God, wait! I know her! I know that woman! It's Marian Lee, the escaped spy!

FIRST OFFICER—Answer!

MARIAN—I—am—Marian—Lee!

SECOND OFFICER—Take her—bind her hands. She shall not escape us again. [She is bound;



Laura enters with a canteen of water ; she kneels beside the wounded, gives them to drink and helps them ; she sees Marian.]

LAURA—What—a woman! and hands tied! Shame! Who is she? Unloose her hands!

SECOND OFFICER—She is an escaped spy—she confesses it.

LAURA—No matter; loose her. Leave her a little bit with me—I beg you, leave her!

SECOND OFFICER—A little while but not unloosed. [He goes.]

LAURA—Poor woman! Who did this? Who are you?

MARIAN—Your prisoner.

LAURA—Were you in the fort?

MARIAN—Yes.

LAURA—Fighting?

MARIAN—Yes.



LAURA—Were our men killed who spiked the cannon?

MARIAN—Yes.

LAURA [shows grief and horror] All? No—not all—say not all!

MARIAN—The leader escaped.

LAURA—Eldred, escaped? He lives?

MARIAN—Like me, a prisoner.

LAURA—Oh, thank you!

MARIAN [aside]—She does not know me. It is Laura Gillford!

LAURA—They will not harm him? Say no!

MARIAN—I cannot answer. I—

LAURA [in anguish]—My God! My God!

MARIAN [aside]—Why did he not let me save him? Oh! it is not too late. Laura Gillford could save his life. She could help him to escape. For her, he'd try it. Shall I? Shall I tell her where he will be taken? They will give him trial—and then



—Oh! I must save him—I must tell her! I must! What? What? And put him in Laura Gillford's arms? Great God! Why should I do that? [With terrible excitement.] Oh, I must! I must do even that. He shall not die! Wait! I have it! Oh, what a resolve! Love—love—love—I shall not surrender you! God! I will use Laura Gillford! She shall go—she shall save him—save him for me, for me! From out her very arms, I'll snatch him back. If I die, if they kill me—it will be for him—for him! God, give me strength to tell her. [She pauses; turns to Laura with assumed calmness; aloud.] Miss Gillford, this is terrible.

LAURA—I am so sorry you are a prisoner.

MARIAN—Not if you knew me. I am Marian Lee!

LAURA [amazed]—What? The spy?

MARIAN—Yes.

LAURA—And you would have killed him just now—killed Eldred Marshall?



MARIAN—I tried to save him, when the rest were killed.

LAURA—You—you tried to save him?

MARIAN [slowly]—Because—because—

LAURA—Marian Lee—

MARIAN—It was my fate. I could not help it. Now I will die. Save him—fly to him in the prison at Savannah! Quick! Help him to escape—save him! [Bunker enters and falls at Marians feet.]

BUNKER—Oh! Miss Marian!

MARIAN—Take Bunker with you—pass the lines of both armies. He knows the roads, the swamps. Go—go! Save him! Save Eldred Marshall! and when your arms are round his neck—think of poor, dead Marian Lee.

LAURA—Oh! Miss Lee; you are not dead; you shall not die!

MARIAN—If only they will shoot me like a soldier, and not hang me like a felon, I am ready. Had



they waited a moment longer, I would have taken my own life.

LAURA—No, no, no! Look! With your own dagger I cut this rope. [She cuts rope.] Officer, come here. [He comes; Laura tears a badge from her breast.] Take this badge of gold to General Sherman. Tell him Laura Gillford asks the pardon of this girl. She must not die. Tell him to remember Allatoona!

[Curtain.]



## ACT IV.

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[SCENE—A fine park in Savannah, used as a prison pen; at back, but in full view, is a box cage for the condemned; it is open-barred at the front, showing interior plainly; the ocean is in view; two guards walk up and down front end of park; some Federal prisoners move uneasily about; it is midnight, but lights burn brightly.]

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FIRST GUARD—It seems a shame, turning this beautiful city park into a pen for Yankee prisoners. I wonder what the people of Savannah think of it?

SECOND GUARD—Don't make a damned bit of difference. Lots of them are disloyal to the Confederacy anyway. Who cares what they think?

FIRST GUARD—They are not the only people tired of this war, I'll tell you.

SECOND GUARD—Well, I'm off duty, and



now I can read the newspaper. [Takes newspaper from pocket.]

FIRST GUARD—What is there new? Let's hear it. Has old Grant taken Richmond again, for the hundredth time? What liars these newspapers are!

SECOND GUARD—No wonder; they get all their news by grapevine telegraph.

FIRST GUARD—Well, what's up, anyway? Anything else?

SECOND GUARD—Sherman is smashing things everywhere in Georgia. At Gordon Pass, though, they got a set back. A lot of desperadoes tried to spike our guns. I guess every mother's son of them got killed.

FIRST GUARD—No; one of them's in here, a prisoner. He escaped once, but he's caught again. What other news?

SECOND GUARD—Bread's up; costs a dollar a loaf now. If the Yankees don't catch us and feed



us, we'll all starve pretty soon. Look here! They've hung one of our spies up North—a woman at that!

FIRST GUARD—No—who was it?

SECOND GUARD—Marian Lee, the scout.

FIRST GUARD—She'll be avenged—mark it. Some fellow here will stretch for that.

SECOND GUARD—They're building a scaffold around there in the alley now, I heard.

[Enter Eldred and another prisoner; the guards pass to one side.]

ELDRED—I am a fresh fish here, Comrade—tell me; have any prisoners got away?

COMRADE—Only to be killed outside. There is no chance. And now they will shoot anyone giving assistance. Read that notice. [He reads on post.] “Notice—Any man or woman aiding a prisoner to escape, will be shot on the spot.”

ELDRED—Well, all the same, I shall try to escape.



COMRADE—They will kill you.

ELDRED—Better dead than here. It can be done. It's nerve only. With nerve one can do anything. Why, look! I was taken at Gordon Pass, a month ago. They killed the others. I had nerve and got away from them. For ten days I roamed inside their lines. I donned their uniform; I joined one of their regiments; I went everywhere; I had a hundred adventures. I know every fort in Savannah; every cannon; every position. At last they caught me, and here I am again. I know a thousand times more of the enemy than Sherman does. I can help him take this city, and I am going to do it. I must get away!

COMRADE—You will get killed.

ELDRED—My nerve will save me.

COMRADE—Save your life; risk nothing.

ELDRED—Why?

COMRADE—Somebody will lament.

ELDRED—For me?



COMRADE—Eldred Marhall, Laura Gillford will lament for you; I know it.

ELDRED—What! You know her? Do you know Laura Gillford?

COMRADE—Friend—you don't know me! In these rags it is no wonder. I am a Captain on Sherman's staff. I knew Miss Gillford.

ELDRED—You—you knew her?

COMRADE—Yes; from the moment of her coming to the army—from the day of the signalling to Allatoona. She was an army heroine. We of the staff admired her—paid her every attention. It was idle wooing. We found she was in love with you. From the moment of your capture at Gordon Pass, she mourned, she wept for you—she talked of you—of you only.

ELDRED—Was she so true!

COMRADE—We feared for her—we tried distractions—horseback riding—every attention—till we even awakened the jealousy of the Colonel's wife.



ELDRED [aside]—I recall that letter found on the Colonel's body now. It was a lie. I knew it then. [Aloud.] Oh, Comrade! further—what more? Tell me of her.

COMRADE—We paid her a thousand attentions. At last she smiled, a little—laughed—and then—one day—

ELDRED—What?

COMRADE—She suddenly disappeared.

ELDRED—Oh, Comrade! Disappeared?

COMRADE—She disappeared.

ELDRED—God! Disappeared?

[Bell rings.]

GUARD—Prisoners, you must stand back; the bell rings. Fall in your places. [They retire.]

[Laura and Bunker enter.]

BUNKER—Yes, Miss Marian—I means Miss Laura—that, right there, am the prison; used to be a park.



LAURA—You are sure of the place, Bunker?

BUNKER—Jes' as sure as I is here, Miss Marian—I means Miss Laura. Wasn't I right here that time when Massa Lee bo't me and carried me off to his plantation in North Georgia, long 'fore de war? Guess you'se losin' your mind, hain't you, Miss Laura? Why, I'se jes' as sure—jes' as familiar with that 'ere park—jes' as familiar—

LAURA—Bunker, why do you call me Miss Marian so often?

BUNKER—Don't 'zactly know, Miss Marian—I means Miss Laura. Does seem jes' perfec'ly unridiculous. You know I was a sort of a body servant of Miss Marian; was jes' always with her, you know; and then the wah broke out, and 'long comes you'uns and Mr. Sherman, and so, here I was, and everything is so confusticated, I reckon, I sometimes jes' says Miss Marian, and sometimes I jes' says Miss Laura.

LAURA—You know, Bunker, they believe here



in Savannah that Miss Marian is dead—shot as a spy by General Sherman!

BUNKER—What! for the Lord's sake! Miss Marian dead? Oh, Miss Laura! [He weeps.]

LAURA—I hoped General Sherman would save her, even if she were a spy, out of love for me. I tried to save her.

BUNKER—Well, la, sakes, Miss Laura!

LAURA—Yes!

BUNKER—Well, I is sorry; I jes' always knowed Miss Marian'd die sometime! She was so tankiferous like. But, Lor', Miss Laura, 'ceptin' yourself, she was the pertiest and jes' the bestest mistress in the state of Georgia.

LAURA—Bunker, you have been my good angel, my true friend. Since that day at Gordon Pass; when Eldred was taken, you have done everything for me. You have guided me through the lines of the enemy—through woods, and swamps—through



every danger, night and day, you have been faithful. Be faithful still.

BUNKER—Why, la, yes! You jes' knows I is.

LAURA—So, now we are here in Savannah! What next, God only knows! And this is the prison, and these are Eldred's guards. [Speaks low.] Bunker, go back to the secret cabin in the city. If Eldred Marshall escapes, and comes to you, hide him—care for him as if he were an angel, Bunker.

BUNKER—And that's jes' what he is, Miss Marian—I means Miss Laura—and that's jes' what I calkerlate to do. You jes' trust me. Didn't Massa Eldred and Mr. Sherman come to Massa Lee's old plantation and set me free? You s'pose I'se goin' to forget that? Not in this world—jes' you trust me. [Exit Bunker.]

LAURA—Here is the notorious prison pen! My heart pounds within me. Can he be here? Can he? Can he? Oh! I have suffered for my little, vain ambition. Great God! what sleepless nights have I not



gone through, in swamp and forest—at last to find this place—to find—— I have carried my life in my hands—and now—if—if—I can only help to save him—if, if, only at last he is here! I will try the guard. They cannot do more than kill me. Look! He turns this way. [Guard walks toward her.] I'll try. [To guard.] Oh! Sentinel; is it allowed? May one speak one moment to a prisoner?

SENTINEL—No; not without permission—to-day, not at all. This is a solemn hour for the men in prison. I pity them.

LAURA—In heaven's name, Sentinel, what is it?

SENTINEL [drum beats]—Hear that drum? It is for the prisoners to assemble. One of them must die.

LAURA—Must die? Sentinel, no!

SENTINEL—Someone must die in retaliation for a Southern spy shot by Sherman. I know nothing further.

LAURA—Who does?



SENTINEL—They must draw lots.

LAURA—Sentinel, tell me—are there among the prisoners any taken at Gordon Pass?

SENTINEL—Only one. The desperadoes who spiked our cannon there, were all killed save one or two.

LAURA—Must they also draw lots?

SENTINEL—Every man in there takes his chance to die. Please pass on; I am on duty and must not talk.

LAURA—Oh! Sentinel; one word. You can—you will help me? Oh! Sentinel; I would know the name of him who draws the fatal number—only his name. I will reward you—send it to me.

SENTINEL—Where?

LAURA—Here, to this address [Gives address.]—a house only a minute's walk from here. Do not ask my name.



SENTINEL—I'll try, Miss. You have a friend in here? I know it. You fear for him?

LAURA—I fear a friend may die.

SENTINEL—In far-away Kentucky, I left a friend. Were I a prisoner, she would die for me. The South is right, but still—I'd see the flag again, I was born under; I'd see my home; I'd see my—

LAURA—Oh! Sentinel; in her name—help me! She, too, will reward you.

SENTINEL—I will do no wrong—but go; you shall have the name. [Exit Laura.]

[An officer places a table near the front of stage; prisoners assemble; officer prepares for drawing lots.]

OFFICER [to another officer]—Let them toll the bell. [Bell tolls. To prisoners] Men, you understand this. General Sherman has executed a Southern woman, taken in fair battle. She was a scout—Marian Lee. There is no law against a woman's fighting for her country. The orders from Richmond



are that you shall draw lots. One of you will be hanged in retaliation! Which one, will now be decided. [Great excitement and emotion.] In that iron kettle on the table there are as many white cards as there are prisoners. On one card there is a black cross. The one who draws that fatal cross——

PRISONER [interrupting]—Sir, we, who are innocent, protest! This is murder—you cannot force us!

OFFICER—You must draw. There is no help. Fall in line, and as you pass the table, one by one, draw your card.

PRISONER—This is infamy!

OFFICER—Sherman should have thought of that. Ready, men! single file——[The bell still tolls as the men fall in line.]

PRISONER—I have a hundred thousand dollars in the North; the half of it is yours if you'll forego this murder.

OFFICER—Be careful! Think you to bribe me



with your Yankee gold? I'll not be bribed. Guards, do your duty.

PRISONER—God! What can be done?

OFFICER—Absolutely nothing.

PRISONER—Have you no heart—no soul?

OFFICER—I obey my orders.

PRISONER—He who gave them, is a fiend!

OFFICER—Talk is useless—go on!

[Low music. One by one the prisoners pass the table and draw out cards; with utmost trepidation each glances at his card, and then holds it up to be seen: Eldred, at last, approaches, draws a card and holds it up; the black cross is on it; all see it and cry out.]

ALL—He is lost. [Much emotion.]

ELDRED—Comrades, it was my fate. One must die; let it be I. We die but once! Oh, my country!  
[Aside.] Laura—Laura—Laura!



PRISONERS [to officer]—Your time will come. It is murder!

OFFICER—Guards, take him to the cage for the condemned. [Amidst great confusion, Eldred is taken away and put in the cage.]

SECOND OFFICER [entering] — Rumors thicken. Sherman has changed his course, and is certainly marching on the city! Strange lights are sent up from the Northern ships every night. They must expect him. Cannon signals are fired during the day.

FIRST OFFICER—There is but one thing to do. The railroad to Charleston is still open. Direct orders from Richmond require us to move the prisoners to Charleston the moment Savannah is really threatened.

SECOND OFFICER—The train is not ready.

FIRST OFFICER—Make it ready to-night. We run the risk of a mutiny here. The prisoners are very sullen and talk low, in groups.



SECOND OFFICER—They will prevent the execution?

FIRST OFFICER—Twenty cannon, bearing on this camp, are filled to the muzzle with grape shot.

SECOND OFFICER—We have not twenty guards. Everybody's ordered to the front. I fear the worst.

FIRST OFFICER—What about the prisoner in the cage?

SECOND OFFICER—Men are building the scaffold now. To-night, do you get the prisoners away on the train; all except this one. I, with a few guards, will stay here till all is over. [Officers salute and go off.]

[Laura and Bunker enter slowly at one side.]

LAURA—The sentinel kept his word. It is dreadful. I wonder he could tell me. Eldred—Eldred is doomed! One small misstep by me and all is now lost. Laura Gillford, in this desperate hour, be thou calm! Bunker, give me the loaf of bread.



[He hands her the loaf.] They'll not refuse bread for a dying man—they cannot—cannot! Oh! I had feared this, and yet I was prepared for it. He shall escape—he must! I will help. Listen, Bunker! [Speaks lower.] In that loaf is secreted a letter to Eldred, and—a pocket saw. In that letter, I tell him to cut through the wall instantly, and wait. The moment the bell on the big church tower strikes 5, to-morrow morning, he is to spring through the opening, rush past the guards, whom I will keep from firing, and hurry to your cabin. [Aside.] They may shoot me for this—let them shoot! I, too, can be desperate. I, who was all softness, fear—now I could take any chance—do anything, so he but lives. What strength great occasion gives to us! Now I am like any soldier. Let them shoot—I will try it! Now, heart—my heart—be brave! Bunker, go on, quick—to the cabin! Good-bye. [Exit Bunker; Laura goes up to Sentinel.] Sentinel, can this bread be handed to the prisoner who drew the unfortunate lot yesterday? Can I speak to him?



SENTINEL—I will call the Corporal. [Calls.] Corporal of the Guard, Post No. 4. [Corporal enters.] The lady asks to speak to the prisoner in the cage.

CORPORAL—What! Away in the night! It is not allowed!

LAURA—For one moment—to give him bread—only bread to eat.

CORPORAL—Not one moment. Give me the bread—he shall have it at once. [Laura hands the loaf.] It is a queer-shaped loaf. [Looks it over.] I hope it's as good as 'tis long.

LAURA—It is very good. I baked it myself. Tell him a friend in the city sends it. He must eat it while it's fresh.

CORPORAL—It shall be done, Miss.

LAURA—I thank you. [Exit Laura.]

CORPORAL [to Sentinel]—She can trust him to eat it quick, I guess. Bread doesn't grow stale on



prisoners' hands—not in this prison, anyway. It's a confounded queer-shaped loaf, but he shall have it. It's a kind of a last supper loaf for him. [He hands it into the cage; low music; curtain falls.]

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[SCENE 2—Curtain rises on same scene, save that it is breaking day; the dawn is red; two soldiers enter.]

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FIRST SOLDIER—It must be morning.

SECOND SOLDIER—It is nearly five. How beautiful the dawn!

FIRST SOLDIER—Did you hear the guns in the night?

SECOND SOLDIER—They say ten thousand Yankees marched on Fort McAllister.

FIRST SOLDIER—If they took it, Savannah is lost. It's the key to everything. Sherman would have communication with his ships. We moved the prisoners in the night, didn't we?



SECOND SOLDIER—I don't know. They'll hang one to-day.

FIRST SOLDIER—When do they hang him?

SECOND SOLDIER—Early this morning, I heard.

FIRST SOLDIER—Let's go and see it. It won't be long. Look! it's daylight now. [Exeunt.]

LAURA [enters and engages new sentinel in talk]—Sentinel, is it true the prisoners are to be taken away? [Eldred is seen cutting his way through wall; Sentinel does not observe it.]

SENTINEL—Yes; gone in the night, Miss. [Laura glances to the cage.] Why do you ask?

LAURA—I have friends among them.

SENTINEL—You Savannah people seem to have many Yankee friends here.

LAURA—I would say good-bye to one. [The big clock begins to strike five; aside.] The clock strikes—my heart stands still. [She counts.] One—



two—three—[She glances still toward the cage.]  
God! Heaven help him—help me! [Eldred climbs  
through the opening and springs away; the Sentinel  
fires as Laura throws herself upon him and the gun  
is knocked aside; officers and soldiers rush in.]

OFFICER—What's that? Who fired?

SENTINEL—Arrest her—the prisoner's gone!  
She helped him—she stopped my killing him—take  
her!

OFFICER [to Laura]—Who are you?

LAURA—Yes; take me! He is gone—he is  
saved!

OFFICER—Who are you that wants to die so  
badly? Read that! [Points to proclamation.]

LAURA—I have—I have read it!

OFFICER—Come with me!

LAURA—Yes; I know—but he is gone—he is  
saved from you—saved—[She is led out sobbing.]  
I tell you—saved!



SOLDIER [rushing in]—All's too late. Fort McAllister was stormed at sunset—the Yankee ships come up the bay!

ANOTHER SOLDIER—The outside forts are fallen; Sherman's in the city!

BUNKER [rushes in]—Thank the Lord God, the Stars and Stripes are wavin' above the city of Savannah!

SOLDIER—To hell with you!

BUNKER—I seed it with my own eyes.

SOLDIER—To hell, you lying nigger!

ANOTHER SOLDIER [entering]—By God, it's true! The Yankee advance, with Sherman at their head, is upon us! Look! What shall we do?

ELDRED [enters with some Federals]—Do? Surrender; every one of you; to an escaped prisoner—that's what to do—and very quick! [They throw down their arms.]

SENTINEL—What! What! You are he who escaped?



ELDRED—Yes; and Sherman himself will be here in half a minute.

SENTINEL—They've got the woman who helped you. She's in the cage. She knocked my gun aside or I had killed you. I'm glad she did.

ELDRED—The woman!—woman! What woman—who? A woman sent that letter? that bread? that saw? The letter had no name. Bring her to me, quick!

LAURA [enters]—Eldred! Eldred!

ELDRED—Laura! Laura! [They embrace.]

LAURA—Oh! Eldred; we have lived a hundred years in this!

ELDRED—Oh! Laura; you have been tried—tried—tried—and found faithful. [Federal officers enter; there are cheers.]

FEDERAL SOLDIER—Look, boys! Sherman himself. [Sherman enters.]

AN OFFICER—Burn every house that held a prisoner. Where's the infernal cage?



SHERMAN—No burning, men! No disorder! What! Look here! Why, what have we here? Laura Gillford! Well, well! Come here. What has happened? We thought you had deserted us.

LAURA [smiling]—Yes, but for a better, General!

SHERMAN—And Eldred Marshall! Well—well—well—and you, too! A thousand explanations—speak!—both at once.

ELDRED—She saved me from this prison, General.

SHERMAN—What! She? Miss Gillford? Ah! she's good at saving. She saved the day at Allatoona once.

LAURA—Eldred, my ambition almost drove you to your death.

ELDRED—Your devotion saved my life! [Marian is brought in.]

LAURA [taking Sherman's hand]—Oh! General Sherman; there she is! You saved her—you



### Allatoona.

saved her! You got my message and the badge! She is not dead! I thank you—I thank you!

SHERMAN [smiling]—I think the girl who sent the badge to me from Gordon Pass saved her.

[Marian is shaken with emotion.]

ELDRED [to Laura]—Oh, I pity her!

SHERMAN—Oh! all is well—all is well! She is pardoned. She once saved Marshall's life. I know it all! She was only aiding her own South as Laura Gillford helped her own North. All is forgiven. [An officer enters and whispers to Sherman, who takes Marian's hand and says] Miss Lee, in this hour of our rejoicing, come! I have this moment received great news for you! Your father was not killed that morning near your old home. He got away—and on our entry was found here in the city.

MARIAN [throwing herself at Sherman's knees]—My father? My father? Oh! General Sherman—General Sherman!



SHERMAN [lifting her up]—In half an hour he will be in your arms. Your father's home—Brandon Hall—where we had our headquarters on the march, was left in perfect order. It is again his—and yours—Go there with him; be happy—the war is almost done. There'll be no North, no South, any longer; but one country again—one destiny. [He turns to Laura.] As to you, little girl [kisses her], if I were a preacher, I would this moment make you the wife of Private Eldred Marshall—from this moment a Captain on the General's staff.

LAURA AND ELDRED—Oh! General Sherman!

SHERMAN [takes their hands]—Two gold medals are being made—one for the soldier who spiked the guns at Gordon Pass, and one for the girl who saved Allatoona.

LAURA AND ELDRED—General Sherman!

[Tableau. As the curtain goes down, the drums play "Marching Through Georgia."]

[Curtain.]































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